

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to M. Magnat, February 6, 1896

553 February 6th. 1896. M. Magnat. Paris. France. (16 rue des Saints Peres.) My dear friend:—

Allow me to thank you for all the trouble you have taken in collecting for the Volta Bureau the French works upon the education of the deaf which the Bureau desires to add to its library.

The Hon. John Hitz, Superintendent of the Volta Bureau has been for some time abroad, and this probably accounts for your failure to hear from the Bureau. Mr. Hitz was summoned to Switzerland on account of the serious illness of his daughter Mrs. Burton, who has since died. He is still in Switzerland and I do not know exactly when he will return. Allow me, therefore, on behalf of the Bureau, to forward the sum of (F55C.) five hundred and fifty francs on account on account of the works you have purchased for the Bureau. Kindly keep the books until you hear from Mr. Hitz, as I do not know the name of the agent employed by the Bureau in forwarding books to this country. Mr. Hitz will write to you himself as soon as he returns and tell you exactly what to do.

I leave Washington very soon for the west, and will be travelling for some time, so that it will be impossible for me to reply to your letters very promptly. I am very sorry for the long delay in answering your letters concerning your visit to America. Personally I am a very poor correspondent and while abroad in a country place. My Secretary was taken ill with malarial fever and upon convalescence had the misfortune to seriously burn his right hand, so that for a very considerable time I was deprived of the services of a private secretary and could not procure another in the place where I was.

I feel that I owe you many apologies for the annoyance my silence 2 559 has caused you.

Library of Congress

The Board of Directors of the Speech Association did not hold a meeting until the 31st. of January 1896, so that I have been unable to report progress until now. I hope sincerely that I may have the pleasure of seeing you in America in July, and of showing you personally how much I value your friendship, and appreciate the sacrifices you are prepared to make on account of the great work in which we are both interested.

Mrs. Bell and my daughters desire to be kindly remembered to you.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell